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WASHINGTON TALK

Briefing

Goldwater Was Upset

The only prediction that can be made with safety about the United States Senate is that it will take longer to act than anyone expects. All other assumptions as to when things will happen on the floor are not to be relied upon, as you would think Senator Barry Goldwater would have learned after 24 years in the august body.

But the veteran Republican was called Saturday in Colorado, where he was "on rather important duty" at the Air Force Academy, and asked, as chairman of the Select Committee on Intelligence, to be in the Senate Monday for a closed session on Central America. "I flew all night to get here," Senator Goldwater told his colleagues Monday. "Now I find that one of the participants is not in town."

This was an open shot at Senator Christopher J. Dodd, Democrat of Connecticut, who had said last week he would move to hold a closed session on Monday but changed his schedule and was back in Connecticut on a speaking engagement while Senator Goldwater was fuming on the floor.

"We Westerners, who have a hard time getting home, are getting a little bit tired of these people in the East who can conduct their business out of a taxi, going home and not showing up until Tuesday," Senator Goldwater declared. "We are getting a little bit tired of this place being run for the benefit of those people who do not live so far away." In the understatement of the month, the Republican described himself as "a little upset."

Senator Dodd's office reported that the Monday schedule was abandoned late last Friday and the offices of both Senate leaders notified, followed apparently by a communications breakdown. The Connecticut Democrat still plans to move for a closed session, perhaps later this week.